K. HEN. O, let us yet be merciful
CAM. So may your highness, and yet punish too.
GREY. Sir, you show great mercy, if you give
him life,
After the taste of much correction.
K. HEN. Alas, your too much love and care of me
Are heavy orisons 'gainst this poor wretch.
If little faults, proceeding on distemper [6],
Shall not be wink'd at, how shall we stretch our
eye [7],
When capital crimes, chew'd, swallow'd, and di-
gested,
Appear before us?—We'll yet enlarge that man,
Though Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey,—in their
dear care,
And tender preservation of our person,—
Would have him punish'd. And now to our French
causes:
Who are the late commissioners [8] ?

[6] —proceeding on DISTEMPER,] i. e. sudden passions.
WARBURTON.

Perturbation of mind. *Temper* is *equality* or *calmness of mind*, from an equipoise or due mixture of passions. *Distemper* of mind is *the predominance of a passion*, as *distemper* of body is the predominance of a *humour*. JOHNSON.

It has been just said by the king, that " it was excess of wine that set him on," and *distemper* may therefore mean *intoxication*. *Distempered in liquor* is still a common expression. Chapman, in his Epicedium on the Death of Prince Henry, 1612, has personified this species of *distemper*:

*" Frantick *distemper*, and hare-ey'd unrest."

And Brabantio says, that Roderigo is—

" Full of supper and *distempering* draughts."

Again, Holinshed, vol. iii. p. 626: " — gave him wine and strong drink in such excessive sort, that he was therewith *distempered*, and reel'd as he went." * STEEVENS.

7 — how shall we stretch our eye,] If we may not *think* at small faults, *how wide must we open our eyes* at great ? JOHNSON.

[8] Who are the late commissioners ?] That is, as appears from the sequel, who are the persons lately appointed commissioners?
M. MASON.